



Staff Sgt. Wooly Black of Camp Roberts’ 164th Grounds Keeping Battalion. This battalion of loyal and dedicated sheep are more cost-effective and environmentally-friendly than dozens of soldiers pushing lawn mowers and fertilizing equipment.

# Homeland beautification

Motivated, dedicated and ready to train, the words of enthusiastic recruits ready to defend and secure this great country, of coarse you may have a difficult time understanding them, unless you speak fluent sheep.

Camp Roberts has housed mobilizing troops on their way to defend the Patriot Missile sites for homeland security and gets them ready for activation.

While these soldiers are over-see we need troops here, to secure and defend homeland beatification. All over the post here at Camp Bob you will find these dedicated soldiers spread wide across fields and rocky terrain, their objective, grass

patrol.

They bravely battle the weather, painful thorns and on coming Hummvée’s in the road by range control.

“Baa-aaa-ba. Ba ba aaa.” Said SSG Wooly Black of the 164th Grounds Keeping Battalion. Black served his last three years with the 83rd Hairborne Rancher Battalion, in charge of wool production for the army black beret.

The job’s not all Kosher though, when interviewing with Capt. Harvey Chop, a retired Special Forces Captain I heard a touching story of how while on patrol his platoon was ambushed by militant coyote forces. He was the only survivor.

Today the sheep of the 183rd are very busy with preparation for the production of the spring line of fashion in the Guard this year.

Head sheep Lt. Col. Kevin Lamb couldn’t reveal the specifics of the spring line, but he did say that the collection would be suitable for lounging around the AO and with the optional M16, it would be perfect for those late night battles you may be engaging in. In either case the Lt. Col. Said, no soldier would be embarrassed to be caught in this outfit. The new line should hit the PX in late March.

A big Hooahh to all the dedicated sheep and their support units.

## Engineers

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one of its members, a local guard member who instructs students on heavy equipment operations at a nearby junior college, will become a warrant officer in the 145th. The instructor, Merlin Welch, has a strong relationship with many private sector construction companies and places many of his students in jobs with these companies.

“We have a lot of commercial equipment that soldiers would use if they worked in outside construction,” Grove said. “A lot of young people can come into the company and launch a career in real world construction through the hands-on training they will receive here.”

These same soldiers will get “real-world” experience at Camp Roberts, according to Lt. Col. Erik Brun, Camp Roberts Facility Manager. The company will have a quarry training area to dig material, improve roads and parking areas, and to improve training sites for a sister company, the 315th Port Construction Company to train for its mission” Brun said. “One of our major projects will be to help develop training areas where the 315th Port Construction Company can use its pile drivers.”

The 315th PCC headquartered in Oxnard, with a detachment in Northern California, is a second engineer company that the California Army National Guard will acquire in 2003. The company will have “pile drivers”—a hammer-like crane for pounding poles used for piers and docks into lake, river, and ocean bottoms—and other port construction equipment. Brun believes that Camp Roberts has excellent training areas where the company can train on its pile drivers and that the Camp’s numerous buildings are opportunities for the unit’s electricians and plumbers to help renovate the installation.

Brun envisions the possibility for 315th PCC electricians and plumbers complementing the 84th EN to renovate billeting and other buildings on the post. The World War II era buildings were originally built to last only four or five years. The buildings, however, have lasted



more than 60 years. The foundations remain strong, but facility maintenance workers continually struggle with antiquated plumbing and electrical systems to keep up with modern needs.

“Camp Roberts is an excellent training area for both vertical and horizontal construction units around the country,” Brun said. “The facility has access to its own training sites plus boundless opportunities. We have 106 two story barracks alone. We have more working training opportunities than can be completed in any two-week annual training period—that National Guard, Army Reserve, Air Guard and Air Force Prime Beef and Red Horse engineers could work on year round.”

With its heavy equipment, the 145th will have ample opportunities to dig, move dirt, and pave roads. Brun envisions opportunities to improve ranges and access roads to the ranges. More importantly, he foresees fewer training restrictions because of Camp Roberts’ close coordination with environmental staff.

“We work hand-in-hand with the NEPA (National Environmental Protection Act) and CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act),” Brun said. “Because of our relationship with environmental staff, the training will complement our efforts to protect the environment while at the same time broad-



ening training opportunities and improving the quality of Camp Roberts’ training areas for soldier training here.”

Prospects for engineer training at the facility also increases Camp Roberts’ future use as a mobilization station. With Army base closures in California, California National Guard soldiers have had to mobilize at Army installations in other states—increasing stress on families created by distance and time during both the mobilization and demobilization process. In 2001 and 2002, the Army used Camp Roberts for mobilizing California Army National Guard units destined for Southwest Asia.

Although the mobilization missions were a success, Camp Roberts’ antiquated facilities could prove to be an obstacle for future mobilizations. With the acquisition of new engineer units in the California National Guard, the training opportunities available at Camp Roberts for military engineers from all branches of the service, a cooperative relationship with environmentalists, and a California Army National Guard initiative that challenges its base commanders to develop creative and imaginative plans for achieving this goal, don’t be surprised to witness the transformation of a World War II era facility into a novel facility that soldiers will no longer see as an eyesore, but as a home away from home.



Artist rendering of a possible spring fashion line for Guard soldiers by the 83rd Hairborne Rancher Battalion. The battalion was also instrumental in the production of the current Army black b beret.



# Thank You

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Veterans Day, November 11, is the time to say ‘thank you’ to those who have worn a military uniform and to those who today are keeping strong the unbroken bond of service.

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